

LEARNING INNOVATION
RESEARCH



CHALLENGES AND
DIFFICULTIES WITH

learning to teach online

IRB# IO5519



Channel Islands
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY



Lorna Gonzalez, Co-PI



Christopher Ozuna, Co-PI

OLC INNOVATE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
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Presentation Highlights



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Introduction & Icebreakers

What the Research Says About
Learning to Teach Online

Deficit Mindset

Troublesome Knowledge Types

Ritual Knowledge

Tacit Knowledge

Conceptually Difficult Knowledge

Inert Knowledge

Foreign/Alien Knowledge

Interactive Activity

Next Steps & Discussion

Your Turn

What is your favorite thing about instructional/learning design or educational development right now?

Your Turn

What is your *least* favorite thing about instructional/learning design or educational development right now?

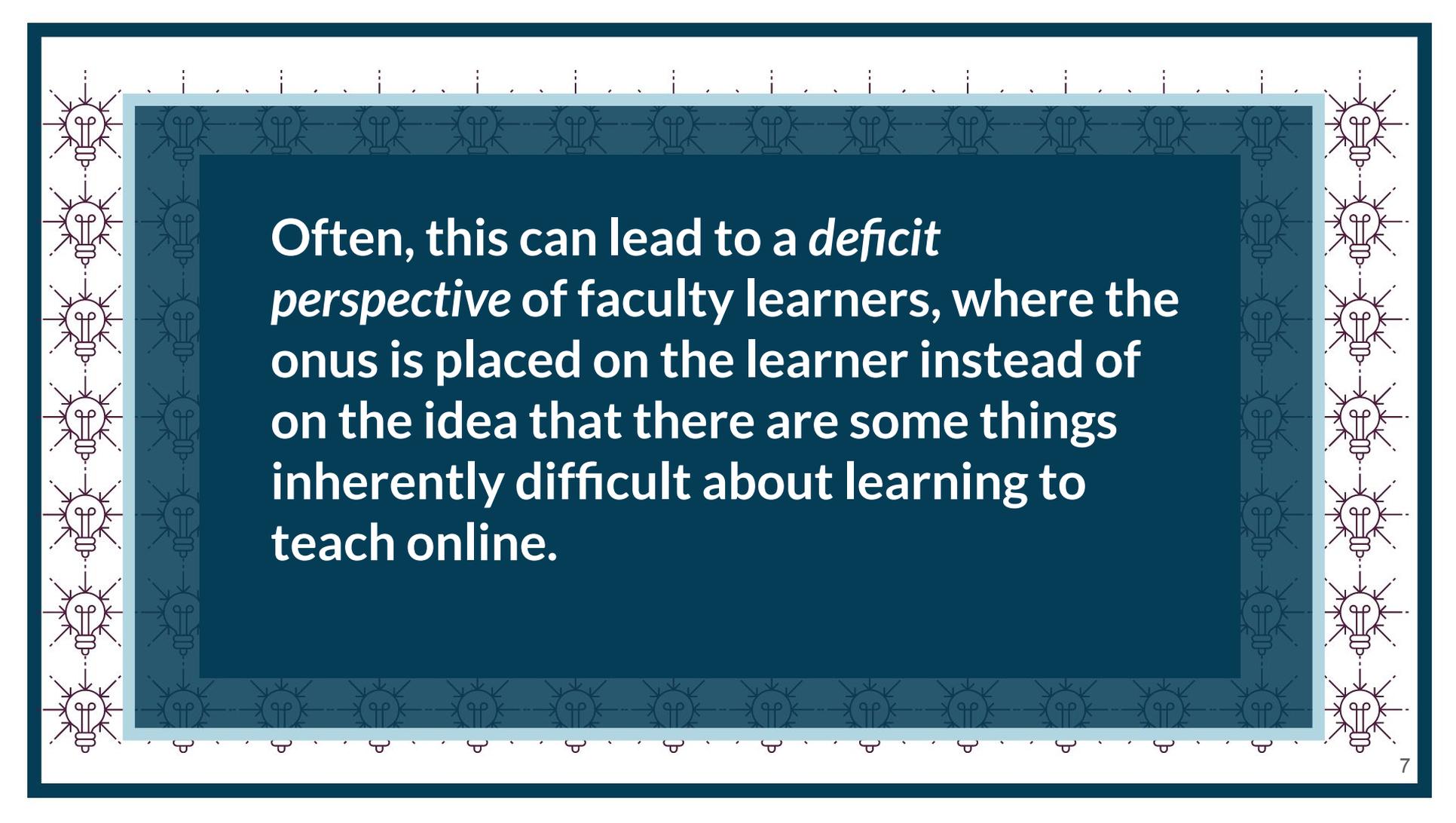
What the Research Says

- Higher Education faculty receive little or no preparation to teach (or to teach online) in graduate school (Zimmerman, 2020; Laurillard, 1993; Bass, 1999).
- Teaching online requires technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Grigoryan, 2018).
- Inadequate preparation for teaching online can have negative consequences for students who take those classes (Xu & Xu, 2019).
- Equity gaps are compounded online (Harris & Wood, 2020).
- Embedded in ways to “keep it simple” (Cavanagh & Thompson, 2019) are practices that can be difficult for some new to online teaching and learning.
- Faculty development is an ongoing, iterative process. Sometimes, faculty want (or need) “best practices.”

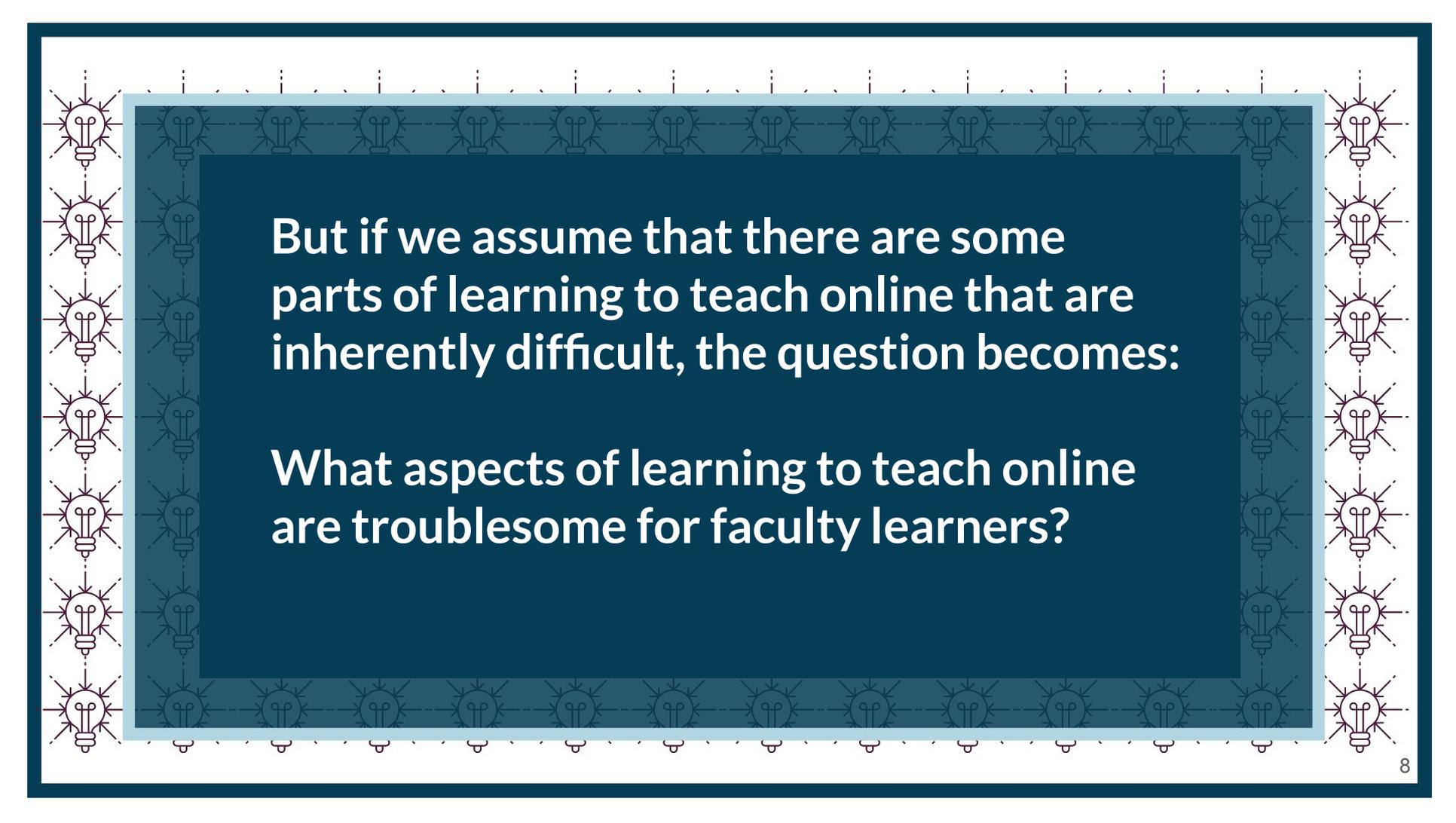
Illustration

I often see instructors have very rigid processes that they've memorized to accomplish something online. For example, they may refer to a written "how-to" document for uploading a PDF to their course site. But, if there is a slight change that their routine doesn't account for, they are unable to adapt the routine in the moment.

Instructors know how to create an assignment in Canvas, for example, but as soon as they need to create an assignment that then includes an external tool, they don't know what to do. That, or they know how to do something ie take a screenshot, but then don't know how to explain to students how to do what they themselves have ritualized for an assignment.

The slide features a decorative border of lightbulb icons. The icons are arranged in a grid pattern, with some appearing as solid white outlines and others as faint, semi-transparent blue outlines. The central text is set against a dark blue rectangular background.

Often, this can lead to a *deficit perspective* of faculty learners, where the onus is placed on the learner instead of on the idea that there are some things inherently difficult about learning to teach online.

The slide features a decorative border of lightbulb icons. The icons are arranged in a grid pattern, with some appearing larger and more prominent than others, creating a sense of depth and focus on the central text.

But if we assume that there are some parts of learning to teach online that are inherently difficult, the question becomes:

What aspects of learning to teach online are troublesome for faculty learners?

Theory: Troublesome Knowledge



RITUAL

*Ingrained,
routine,
habitual*



*e.g., how to
take a
screen shot*



INERT

*Sits in
mind's attic;
seldom
accessed*



*e.g.,
importing
media*



CONCEPTUALLY DIFFICULT

*New +
misunderstanding*



*e.g., what is
a module*



FOREIGN

*Perspective
that is
different from
[learner's]*



*e.g.,
accessibility*



TACIT

*Commonplace
to socio-
cultural
practice*



*e.g.,
decisions
about tool
use*

Results

Sometimes, publishing a course is a barrier. People think their course is live, but it has not been published.

“

Instructors forget to do things like check to make sure all of their links to files, outside urls, etc. are still up to date and functional. Some instructors will import their course from the previous semester on Canvas, change due dates, and call it day without checking to make sure that everything is still linking in the correct place and that the links are still functional.



INERT

*Sits in
mind's attic;
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TACIT

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Using a course organization chart to map out the lessons and themes the lessons belong to.

Page organization, like having a pleasing image, including the time to complete an assignment or module, etc.

As instructional designers we use ideas around learning outcomes and rubrics a lot. Some instructors have never thought about learning outcomes or rubrics [...] content often comes first. It would be great to be able to start every new conversation with a conversation about teaching philosophy so that there are not assumptions made on either side. We just don't always have the time. And notice I say teaching philosophy, not learning theories - as that conversation is harder to have.

“

Results

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*e.g., what is
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Groups [such as in an LMS] is a difficult knowledge piece because while some of the basic features are comparable to how groups would be used in a face-to-face setting, there are additional features that would often help instructors streamline their course, but for many this is hard to understand without prior experience.

The role of assessment can be difficult because we often use it as an evaluative tool rather than a learning experience.

Moving to a new LMS is exactly what I am dealing with. Things are similar but different and instructors are often tempted to "figure it out on their own" instead of asking for help and this results with confusion for the instructor and more importantly the students.

“

Results

“

For some reason, instructors have it in their head that inclusive design means lowering rigor or lowering standards when that is not the case at all. Many faculty want to teach the way they learn best and it is doing a disservice to students, particularly in an online environment. Giving students choice, thinking about equity, etc. does not mean that we are somehow debasing education or lowering the bar.

- The idea that face to face teaching is the gold standard so that when teaching online they should just try and replicate that face to face style. For example, record 60 minute long lectures or have 60 minute long, 3 times a week synchronous sessions that replicate the face to face lecture.



FOREIGN

*Perspective
that is
different from
[learner's]*



*e.g.,
accessibility*

Next Steps

- **QUESTIONNAIRE REMAINS OPEN**
(Replicable, Agregable)
- **COMPLETE ANALYSIS/REPORTING**
(other troublesome knowledge)
- **PHASE 2: EXPERT PANEL**



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